

Environmental Health Report Card October 2005









Executive Summary

About the Cover

The Monroe County Environmental Management Council held its second annual environmental photography competition and show in 2005: *Capturing Environmental Treasures in Monroe County*. The pictures on the cover include some of the winners in this competition:

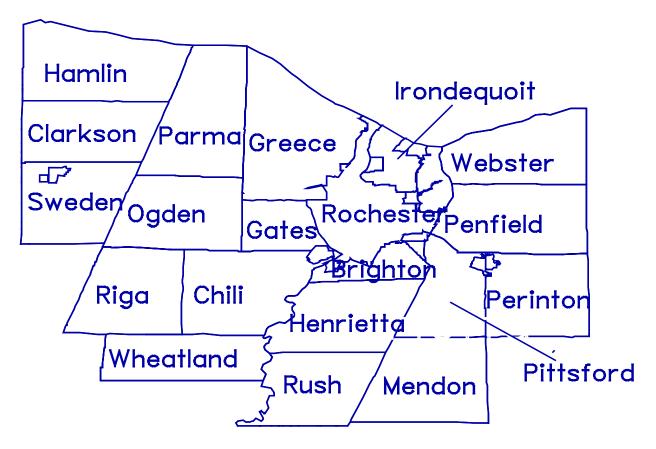
Location	<u>Title</u>	Photographer	<u>Place</u>
Upper Left	Mt. Hope Cemetery in Winter	Pramodh Seneviratne	1 st Place Novice Landscape Best in Show
Upper Right	Milkweed	Maureen O'Byrne	1 st Place – Advanced Plantlife
Lower Left	Deer	Maureen O'Byrne	3 rd Place – Advanced Wildlife
Lower Right	Green River	Matt MacDonald	3 rd Place – Advanced Landscape

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Description of County

Monroe County comprises an area of approximately 660 square miles in Western New York State. It is bordered on the north by Lake Ontario, on the east by Wayne County, on the south by Livingston and Ontario Counties, and on the west by Orleans and Genesee Counties. The City of Rochester is almost perfectly centered within the county, surrounded by a ring of developed suburban towns. These towns, in turn, are surrounded by a secondary arc of semi-rural towns. The Genesee River, flowing North, bisects the county, descending over a series of three falls within the city for a total drop of 235 feet before flowing into Lake Ontario. The New York State Barge Canal, descending to the East, also bisects the county and crosses the Genesee River, on grade, just a few miles South of downtown Rochester.

Monroe County, NY



Population

According to 2000 census data, Monroe County has 735,343 residents and Rochester has a population of 219,773 within its city limits. Rochester is the third largest city in New York after NYC and Buffalo.

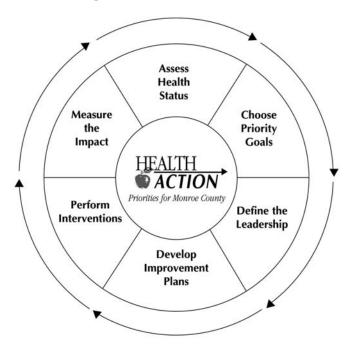
2000 CENSUS	MONROE	CITY OF	SUBURBS
Population Numbers	COUNTY	ROCHESTER	
Total population	735,343	219,773	515,570
Total Under age 18	188,256	61,735	126,521
Under 5 years	46,977	17,227	29,750
5 to 9 years	54,661	18,733	35,928
10 to 14 years	55,725	17,233	38,492
15 to 17 years	30,893	8,542	22,351
18 to 24 years	69,674	25,589	44,085
25 to 24 years	97,480	37,652	59,828
35 to 44 years	118,293	33,057	85,236
45 to 54 years	102,728	25,014	77,714
55 to 64 years	63,133	14,749	48,384
65 to 74 years	46,468	9,992	36,476
75 to 84 years	35,676	8,179	27,497
85 + years	13,635	3,806	9,829

Source: 2000 Census

HEALTH ACTION Overview:

In 1995, Monroe County health care and planning organizations formed a partnership called **HEALTH ACTION**: **Priorities for Monroe County**. The vision of **HEALTH ACTION** is continuous, measurable improvement in health status in Monroe County. **HEALTH ACTION** oversees community health improvement in five areas of focus. These include maternal child health, adolescent health, adult and older adult health and environmental health

HEALTH ACTION involves individuals, healthcare systems, businesses and the public health community in a process that includes six phases of a continuous cycle: The first phase of the cycle, assessing health status, results in the production of health report cards in each focus area.



The release of the Environmental Health Report Card in 1999 was a significant step in building a community agenda to address important issues in the environment, particularly those that impact human health. Eleven goals to improve the health status of the environment in Monroe County were included in the 1999 report card, based on the EPA's December, 1996 document "Environmental Goals for America"

- 1) Ensure Clean Surface Waters
- 2) Ensure Safe Public Drinking Water
- 3) Improve Outdoor Air Quality
- 4) Improve Indoor Air Quality
- 5) Reduce Lead Levels in Children
- 6) Reduce Toxic Chemical Releases
- 7) Prevent Accidental Releases
- 8) Ensure Safe Disposal of Solid Wastes
- 9) Continue Restoration of Contaminated Sites
- 10) Reduce Exposure to Rabies
- 11) Reduce Exposure to Foodborne Disease

The report card was presented to several groups in the community who provided input about each goal. The list was consolidated to six goals. Responses from the community were tallied and reviewed by the Environmental Advisory Committee to the Monroe County Board of Health. The Board approved the committees recommended priorities for Action in January 2000.

- Increase pollution prevention efforts with homeowners
- Increase pollution prevention efforts with small businesses
- Reduce industrial releases of toxic substances to air, water and land
- Reduce pollutants discharged to waterways in stormwater and wastewater

Leadership groups were formed to address these priorities for action. Progress reports for each of these goals are reported on pages 3-5 of this document.

The release of the 2005 Environmental Health Report Card provides a current assessment of the state of the environment, including four new goal areas:

- 1) Land Use
- 2) Transportation
- 3) Energy
- 4) West Nile Virus

Beginning in the fall of 2005, the Monroe County Board of Health will lead a process to encourage participation of community stakeholders in re-assessing priorities for action in Environmental Health

Sources and Interpretation of Data

The goals address the issues that have the greatest impact on the community. When possible, data from Monroe County are compared to state and federal regulations, or comparative data from other areas. Data in the report card come from a variety of sources including the Monroe County Department of Public Health, NYS Department of Health, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), US Environmental Protection Agency, other governmental agencies, businesses and other organizations.

Goals and Trends in Environmental Health

Achieving improvements in the environment requires the involvement of individuals, businesses, environmental organizations and government agencies at the local, state and/or federal levels. Issues can be very complex and

the impact of proposed changes must be carefully evaluated. The involvement of all of these groups contributes to long-term positive change.

Trends were determined by an analysis of the measures available for each goal. It is important to understand with the complexity of these issues there is sometimes insufficient data to make a determination. The determination of a trend is based on the expertise of environmental health professionals.

Questions or comments regarding the Environmental Health Report Card may be directed to:

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Progress Report: Monroe County Environmental Health Priorities for Action 1999 - 2004

In 1999, the Monroe County Board of Health designated four priorities for action to improve the health of the environment in Monroe County. This section describes activities addressing each of these four priorities.

Priority for Action: Reduce pollutants discharged to waterways in stormwater and wastewater:

Local Activities:

- Stormwater Coalition Established: The Monroe County Stormwater Coalition was formed in 2000 as a result of the recognition that many municipalities in Monroe County would be affected by new federal stormwater rules. The Monroe County Department of Public Health was identified as a leader in the state on water quality issues that could facilitate collaboration among the municipalities in their compliance. This strategy maximizes resources and reduces duplication of effort. An Inter-Municipal Agreement was drafted and signed by each municipality in 2004. The new stormwater regulations, effective January 8, 2003, set forth a policy that municipalities that meet certain demographic criteria must have a stormwater implementation plan by 2008. The plan must include six key items: education; public participation; best management practices at construction sites both during and after construction; measures to address illicit discharges; and a pollution prevention program to educate key businesses and municipal facilities that may contribute to stormwater pollution. In May 2004, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation awarded over \$300,000 to the Monroe County Department of Public Health to support these efforts.
 - <u>Construction site erosion and siltation</u>: The Phase II stormwater regulations will require that construction site erosion and siltation is minimized.
 - <u>Atmospheric deposition/impervious surfaces</u>: The Monroe County Environmental Health Laboratory has conducted monitoring regarding atmospheric deposition (pollution from the air that falls to the ground) in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey. Efforts to mitigate atmospheric deposition are focused on managing the runoff from impervious areas.
- <u>Irondequoit Creek Watershed Collaborative Recommendations for Comprehensive Stormwater Mangement (including Developers Packet)</u>: Monroe and Ontario Counties, their Soil and Water Conservation Districts, five towns and three villages have developed common water quality goals and common stormwater report and pollution prevention plan procedures for developers.

- <u>Irondequoit Bay Wetlands Project</u>: A weir has been constructed on Irondequoit Creek to manage water flows so that stormwater makes contact with natural wetlands south of Irondequoit Bay. Monitoring has been conducted that shows that these natural wetlands are removing some nutrients and sediment that would otherwise enter Irondequoit Bay and contribute to algae blooms. Operation of the weir and continued monitoring is expected to continue until at least 2006.
- Road Deicing Task Group Initiated, 2001. A draft problem report was prepared. Efforts were initiated to
 track de-icing product usage and to analyze impacts of various de-icing products. Program goals include
 developing education programs for users of de-icers and to develop an education program for the general
 public.
- Loss of fish and wildlife habitat: The Rochester Embayment Remedial Action Plan (RAP) identified habitat loss causes due to filling and draining of wetlands, removal of riparian vegetation, and sedimentation. Other contributing factors include road salt usage, lack of fluctuation in lake levels, development near shorelines, impacts of polluted stormwater runoff, and stream-bank erosion. Criteria have been established to determine milestones to use to judge when loss of fish and wildlife habitat problems have abated.
- <u>Constructed wetlands</u>: The Department of Public Health, Planning Department, Soil and Water Conservation District, and municipalities who are members of the Irondequoit Watershed Collaborative make efforts to encourage or require the creation of constructed wetlands to mitigate the negative impacts of impervious surfaces that generate stormwater runoff.
- <u>Lawn Care</u>: An educational program has been implemented that targets homeowners at the neighborhood level with an educational campaign and technical assistance to reduce usage of lawn care products that could negatively impact water quality. To date, approximately 100 homes in 3 pilot neighborhoods have successfully participated in this project. Grants have been received to expand this program into other areas of the County.

Priority for Action: Reduce industrial releases of toxic substances to air, water and land:

Local Activities:

- <u>Kodak</u>: Kodak has spent millions of dollars to better control their emissions and has set measurable goals for reductions in emissions, energy and water use.¹
- <u>ISO 14001</u>: Several companies including Kodak, Xerox, Heidelberg Digital, Arnold, Pulsafeeder, Delphi and Rochester Plating Works have received ISO 14001 certification which requires that these companies maintain an Environmental Management System (EMS) that minimizes harmful effects on the environment caused by its activities and achieve continual improvement of its environmental performance.

Pollution Prevention efforts with small businesses:

Local Activities:

• Monroe County Strategic Environmental Management Initiative: The Monroe County Department of Public Health, Rochester Institute of Technology and the Industrial Management Council developed the Monroe County Strategic Management Initiative (MCSEMI). As part of this program, RIT provided a series of training sessions and other technical assistance for small and medium sized businesses to develop environmental management systems and to apply for ISO 14001 certification. The Industrial Management Council helped to recruit businesses. Costs for the program were supported with a grant from the New

^{1 2002} Kodak Park Environmental Annual Report, p.6.

York State Department of Economic Development. Several businesses developed environmental management systems resulting in better pollution prevention and cost savings, but none formally applied for ISO 14001 accreditation.

- Household Hazardous Waste Facility: The Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator (CESQG) program continues to grow. The HWW facility received a permit from New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to accept hazardous waste from small businesses if they met certain criteria. The CESQG program was designed to assist smaller businesses with the management and disposal options of hazardous waste. From 1995 through 2001 the CESQG program has accepted hazardous waste from 547 businesses
- <u>Pollution Prevention Education and Outreach:</u> Best Management Practices (BMP) is a county program that targets image processors such as Photo Finishers, Commercial Imaging, Diagnostic and X-Ray film processors. The BMP defines the treatment options, performance standards and record keeping requirements. This program is expected to reduce the amount of silver discharged to wastewater treatment plants, increase the amount of silver recovered, avoid new administrative burdens and encourage water conservation and pollution prevention efforts. Workshops were held in 2002 that were attended by 225 individuals.
- <u>Dentists</u>: A new effort to enlist greater involvement of dentists in recycling and pollution prevention is being spearheaded by the Monroe County Department of Environmental Services (DES). DES is developing a program to require dentists to adhere to best management practices to minimize the discharge of mercury, silver, and other pollutants to the public sewer system. The Small Business Pollution Prevention Task Group presented a pollution prevention program for the Monroe County Dental Society.
- <u>Metal Finishers:</u> The Monroe County Department of Pure Waters and the USEPA co-sponsored a pollution prevention workshop of permitted Metal Finishers. The workshop was a hands-on demonstration on how to reduce water consumption, improve metals pre-treatment removals and save money based on performance measures.
- <u>Auto recyclers</u>: A pollution prevention training was developed and hosted by the Department of Environmental Conservation (Region 8), City of Rochester and Monroe County. The DEC (Region 8) delivered a pollution prevention manual and poster to all auto re-cycling facilities in Monroe County.
- Computer Recycling: DEC and EPA requires businesses and other organizations to properly dispose of idle, obsolete or non-working electronic equipment to prevent releases of lead, mercury and other toxic chemicals.

Priority for Action: Increase Pollution Prevention efforts with homeowners:

Local Activities:

- <u>HUD Lead Based Paint Hazard Control Grant Program</u>; This is a \$2.1 million grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded to Monroe County in 2002. The grant is a collaborative effort by the Monroe County Department of Health in partnership with the City of Rochester; The Rochester Housing Development Fund Corporation; Greater Rochester Housing Partnership; The Housing Council in the Monroe County Area, Inc.; Neighborhood Housing Services of Rochester, Inc.; and other governmental and community agencies. The grant targets 420 lead-safe housing units in high-risk neighborhoods. Approximately \$1,563,825.00 is available for the implementation of a combination of permanent abatement and interim control of lead hazards in each of these units.
- <u>Household Hazardous Waste Facility</u>: In November of 1998 Monroe County unveiled a new, modern HHW Facility. The new facility doubled the size of the operations area and storage capacity. This allowed them to

change their operating hours to serve residents on a weekly basis instead of once a month and better serve Monroe County residents. Over 7000 residents were served in 2001.

- <u>Car Repair</u>: A brochure is being developed to distribute to individuals who purchase autos at auto auctions and other do-it-yourself auto mechanics to educate them on ways to prevent pollution of the environment from fluids and hazardous materials contained in vehicles.
- <u>Lawn Care</u>: The Great Lawns/Great Lakes program has been developed to educate homeowners at the neighborhood level, provide homeowners with soil tests, and makes recommendations for lawn care that protects the environment.
- <u>Mercury</u>: The Monroe County Department of Environmental Services provides citizens with a mercury-free thermometer if they turn in a mercury thermometer at the Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

Monroe County Environmental Health Summary

CLEAN WATERS

GOAL: Clean Surface Waters that Protect Human Health and Support Thriving Fish and Wildlife Populations

TREND: Mixed Results

MEASURES:

- A fish advisory still exists for Lake Ontario and its connecting waters including Irondequoit Bay and the Lower Genesee River. Levels of contaminants causing the fish advisory are gradually declining.
- The water quality of the Genesee River remains stable since significant improvements that took place between 1974-1994.
- Most of the major dischargers are in substantial compliance with their SPEDES permit.
- The water quality in Irondequoit Bay has improved substantially in the last 15 years.
- Ontario Beach is frequently closed on days when bathers would enjoy swimming.
- The overall bacteriological quality at Ontario Beach, as measured by fecal coliform levels, has been worse in recent years than in 1972.

LAND USE

GOAL: To Plan Development that Conserves Resources, Preserves Natural Habitats and Encourages Walking for the Benefit and Protection of Public Health

TREND: Mixed Results

- Sixteen towns and the City of Rochester have at least one Mandated Environmental Conservation Practice in their review process.
- The number of urban square feet per person is increasing.
- In the last 20 years, 51,570 acres of farmland was developed or became idle.
- Town of Sweden has instituted a Right to Farm Law to preserve the farms in their town. Seventeen of 30 areas determined to be environmentally sensitive have been preserved partially or in their entirety.

SAFE DRINKING WATER

GOAL: To Ensure that All Public Water Suppliers Provide Consumers with Consistently Safe, Potable Water in Full Compliance with Federal and New York State Drinking Water Standards

TREND: Stable

MEASURES:

- No Maximum Contaminant Level violations have occurred for any public supplier.
- No Total Coliform Rule violations have occurred for any public supplier.
- No Giardia or Cryptosporidium have been found in the public water supplies.
- There have been no Boil Water Advisories since 1987.
- Public suppliers have submitted all required Vulnerability Assessments, appropriate certifications and required Emergency Response Plans to the Monroe County Department of Health.

CLEAN AIR

GOAL: Improve Ambient Air Quality and Reduce Overall Exposure to Airborne Pollutants

TREND: Improving

MEASURES:

- All ambient air monitoring stations show Monroe County to be well below the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Carbon Monoxide, Sulfur Dioxide, Ozone, Particulate Matter (PM-10), and Lead.
- According to the US EPA Air Quality Index there have been some days when the air quality may impact human health.
- Between 1991 and 2001, Kodak Park has reported reduction in its annual air emissions by 9.9 million pounds, a 72% reduction.
- Between 1987 and 2001, Kodak Park methylene chloride annual emissions were reduced by 8.05 million pounds, a 90% reduction. NYSDEC lowered the annual guideline concentration from 8 ppb to 0.6 ppb. Kodak emissions were below the required 8 ppb old standard but do not meet the 0.6 ppb new standard.

TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: Improved air quality and more efficient use of limited energy resources

TREND: Worse

- There was a 4.8% increase in the number of people who drove to work alone between 1990 and 2000.
- There was a 22.7% decrease in the number of people who carpooled between 1990 and 2000.
- There was a 36.2% decrease in the number of people who used public transportation between 1990 and 2000.
- The Regional Traffic Operations Center has the ability to control traffic signals for rerouting traffic during construction or accidents reducing idling time of rerouted cars.
- Total On-Road Mobile Source Ozone-precursor emissions for Monroe County is 31,480 tons.

ENERGY USE

GOAL: To Conserve Energy and Resources

TREND: Insufficient Data

MEASURES:

- Energy use seems to have remained stable over the last few years.
- Limited local measures. Need to develop measures.
- New York State has instituted programs to make homes and businesses more energy efficient.

INDOOR AIR

GOAL: To Alleviate Conditions that Contribute to Respiratory Irritation, Allergies and Asthma

TREND: Improving

MEASURES:

- The New York State Legislature passed a more stringent smoking code for work sites and public places which was implemented on July 24, 2003. This new code significantly reduces exposure to environmental tobacco smoke for Monroe County residents.
- Due to the natural geology, homes in the towns of Wheatland, Rush and Mendon are more likely to have radon levels above EPA guidelines.

LEAD POISONING

GOAL: To Reduce the Level of Lead in Children Age 0-6 Years Old Diagnosed with Elevated Blood Lead Levels by Reducing Their Exposure to Sources Identified as Lead Hazards

TREND: Improving

- The number and percent of children with confirmed elevated blood lead levels has declined steadily over the last several years.
- The number of children screened with confirmed blood level $\ge 20 \mu g/dl$ in the County's high risk areas has declined from 640 in 1994 to 76 in 2003.
- Over the last few years, the number of children with blood lead levels high enough to require treatment has dropped from a high of 64 children in 1994 to 6 children in 2004.
- The City and County HUD funded Lead grant programs have been removing lead from homes.
- A new local law was implemented that requires environmental investigation whenever a child 0-6 years old has two confirmed, venous blood lead screen tests, a minimum of three months apart, between $15 19 \,\mu\text{g/dl}$ within a one year period.

TOXIC FREE COMMUNITY

GOAL: To Reduce Toxic Chemical Releases in Monroe County

TREND: Stable

MEASURES:

- In Monroe County, industries report that total annual toxic releases to air, water and land have been reduced by over 16 million pounds between 1988 and 2003, a 70% reduction. The majority of this reduction was made between 1988 and 1994. Levels continue to drop but at a steadier pace.
- Pesticide use has remained stable in the years reported.
- Pesticide concentrations at drinking water intakes were below Federal and State standards.
- Several Persistent Bio-accumulative Toxic Chemicals have been added, or had their threshold amount reduced in the Toxic Release Inventory Reports.

PREVENTING ACCIDENTAL RELEASES

GOAL: To Prevent or Minimize the Detrimental Effects on Public Health, Personal Property, and the Environment from Accidental Release of Petroleum Products and Hazardous Substances

TREND: Mixed Results

MEASURES:

- The annual number of reported hazardous material incidents has increased over the past seven years. Better reporting is suspected as the reason for this increase.
- Monroe County Department of Public Health handled 387 calls from October 9, 2001 through February 4, 2002 concerning anthrax.

SAFE WASTE MANAGEMENT

GOAL: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Safely Dispose of Solid Wastes Generated within Monroe County

TREND: Improving

- Monroe County generated 1.5 million tons of solid waste in 2000.
- Businesses and residents recycle approximately 786,000 tons of assorted materials annually. The amount of waste recycled from 1996 through 2003 increased by 12%.
- The Household Hazardous Waste Facility has accepted over 1,400 tons of waste since 1991. In 1997, Monroe County collected eight tons of unusable pesticides through the "1997 clean Sweep" program. Two more "Clean Sweep" days have been held bringing the total amount of unusable pesticide collected to 12.7 tons.

RESTORATION OF CONTAMINATED SITES

GOAL: To Remediate Sites in Monroe County Contaminated with Hazardous or Radioactive Materials so that There Will Be No Danger to Public Health and/or the Environment and the Sites are Restored to Desired Use

TREND: Improving

MEASURES:

- Through July 1, 1997, a total of \$14.15 million in New York State funds have been expended on investigation and remediation at 47 sites in Monroe County.
- In 2002, one site was remediated or found to be non-hazardous. In the same year, three more sites were added to the Inactive Hazardous Waste Site Program.
- The Voluntary Cleanup Program includes 25 projects in progress. Seven have been completed.

RABIES

GOAL: To Reduce the Incidence Human Exposure to Potentially Rabid Domestic and Wild Animals

TREND: Stable

MEASURES:

- There were 176 persons treated for possible exposure to rabies in 2003.
- Eleven animals tested positive for rabies in 2003.
- There have been no significant changes in data from previous years.

WEST NILE

GOAL: To Limit the Number of Human Cases of West Nile Virus

TREND: Stable

MEASURES:

- Monroe County has had no deaths from West Nile Virus and only one human case of West Nile Virus in 2003
- Monroe County instituted an information campaign for people to reduce standing water at or around their properties to reduce the mosquito population.
- Bird, mosquito and human surveillance programs are in place to warn of potential outbreaks.

SAFE FOOD

GOAL: To Reduce the Exposure of Monroe County Residents to Foodborne Disease

TREND: Stable

- There was only one foodborne disease outbreak in Monroe County in 2003.
- The Monroe County Department of Public Health certified 1,090 food workers in 2003.
- A 2-tier food training and certification program was initiated in 2004.

MONROE COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH GOALS QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

CLEAN WATERS	GOAL: Clean Surface Waters that Protect Human Health and Support Thriving Fish and Wildlife Populations	TREND: Mixed Results
LAND USE	GOAL: To plan development that conserves resources, preserves natural habitats and encourages walking for the benefit and protection of public health	TREND: Mixed Results
SAFE DRINKING WATER	GOAL: To Ensure that All Public Water Suppliers Provide Consumers with Consistently Safe, Potable Water in Full Compliance with Federal and New York State Drinking Water Standards	TREND: Stable
CLEAN AIR	GOAL: Improve Ambient Air Quality and Reduce Overall Exposure to Airborne Pollutants	TREND: Improving
TRANSPORTATION	GOAL: Improved air quality and more efficient use of limited energy resources	TREND: Worse
ENERGY USE	GOAL: To Conserve Energy and Resources	TREND: Insufficient Data
INDOOR AIR	GOAL: To Alleviate Conditions that Contribute to Respiratory Irritation, Allergies and Asthma	TREND: Improving
LEAD POISONING	GOAL: To Reduce the Level of Lead in Children Age 0-6 Years Old Diagnosed with Elevated Blood Lead Levels by Reducing Their Exposure to Sources Identified as Lead Hazards	TREND: Improving
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SAFE WASTE MANAGEMENT	GOAL: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Safely Dispose of Solid Wastes Generated within Monroe County	TREND: Improving
RESTORATION OF CONTAMINATED SITES	GOAL: To Remediate Sites in Monroe County Contaminated with Hazardous or Radioactive Materials so that There Will Be No Danger to Public Health and/or the Environment and the Sites are Restored to Desired Use	TREND: Improving
RABIES	GOAL: To Reduce the Incidence Human Exposure to Potentially Rabid Domestic and Wild Animals	TREND: Stable
WEST NILE VIRUS	GOAL: To Limit the Number of Human Cases of West Nile Virus	TREND: Stable
SAFE FOOD	GOAL: To Reduce the Exposure of Monroe County Residents to Foodborne Disease	TREND: Stable